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Women and reconstruction

Westminster

[1917]

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WOMEN
AND
RECONSTRUCTION

SOME CONSIDERATIONS RELATING TO THE POSITION OF WOMEN AFTER THE WAR

PUBLISHED BY THE
NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES,
14, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1.
May, 1917.

Price One Shilling Net.

May, 1917

WOMEN AND RECONSTRUCTION

SOME CONSIDERATIONS RELATING TO THE POSITION OF WOMEN AFTER THE WAR

"When we come to settle the conditions of labour with hundreds of thousands, running now into millions, of women in work in which they were never engaged before, when we come to re-cast the whole of our industrial system, are we going to fling them out without giving them a voice in determining the conditions? All I can say is it is an outrage, it is ungrateful, unjust, inequitable."

MR. LLOYD GEORGE, March 28th, 1917.

"Short of actually bearing arms in the field, there is hardly a service which has contributed, or is contributing, to the maintenance of our cause in which women have not been at least as active and as efficient as men, and wherever we turn we see them doing, with zeal and success, and without any detriment to the prerogatives of their sex, work which three years ago would have been regarded as falling exclusively within the province of men. This is not a merely sentimental argument, though it appeals to our feelings as well as our judgment. But what I confess moves me still more in this matter is the problem of reconstruction when the War is over. The questions which will then necessarily arise in regard to women's labour and women's functions and activities in the new ordering of things—for, do not doubt it, the old order will be changed—are questions in regard to which I, for my part, feel it impossible, consistently either with justice or with expediency, to withhold from women the power and the right of making their voice directly heard."

MR. ASQUITH, March 28th, 1917.

"I have been all my life a consistent opponent of the extension of the Franchise to women. . . . I would vote for the recommendations of this Conference, wholly from beginning to end, much though I dislike some of them, rather than raise my voice to-day against the granting of recognition to the women who have not only, as the Prime Minister said, suffered and died for their country in many of the fields of war, but, let there be no mistake, without whose heroism, self-denial, skill, physical strength and endurance, this country could never have successfully faced the crisis through which we are passing."

MR. WALTER LONG, March 28th, 1917.

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I.—INTRODUCTION.

An attempt has been made in the following pages to outline the situation which will arise after the war especially in its relation to the position of women and their enfranchisement.

In August, 1916, Mr. Asquith stated as forcibly as possible the claim of women to be heard on the problems vitally affecting their interests which must arise after the war. A majority of the Speaker's Conference on Electoral Reform has recommended that some measure of women's suffrage should be conferred, and has also proposed a practical scheme of enfranchisement. But unless Parliament is willing to remove the sex disability and to carry through without further delay a Franchise Bill in which women are included, the claim which Mr. Asquith declared unanswerable will be in effect denied.

We regard with the gravest apprehension the position that may then arise. If the question of the restoration of those trade union customs which ordain the **exclusion of women from the better paid and more skilled kinds of work is to be settled without consultation with the women concerned, we anticipate an outburst of discontent which would not be without justification, and would intensify the conflict of industrial interests which is inevitable upon the return of peace.**

This aspect of the question, important though it be, is but a part of the far larger problem of the share which women are to take in the work and responsibilities of the nation. In view of the change that has taken place in the work of women, we feel justified in maintaining that the time has come for a corresponding change in their responsibilities.

During the last 50 years the mental and physical activities of women have been increasingly used by the State in industries, trade and administration. Their position in the professions of teaching and medicine, no less than in the textile and weaving industries, is now an essential part of the national wealth, and **it would be unwise, even if it were possible, to force them unwillingly to return to the conditions of the century before last.**

Since the outbreak of war, the forces which have drawn women into the stream of organised national effort have been greatly accelerated, and this process has been of undoubted and essential value to the State.

But it must be borne in mind that in the situation which will arise after the war the contribution of women to the life of the community will be no less necessary than it has been since August, 1914. We have given in the following pages facts and figures which **show the importance of the part played by women in sustaining the vital forces of the nation,** and have attempted to indicate the lines on which it seems probable that their work will develop, if conditions are such as to allow women to contribute freely and fully to the national welfare.

The Prime Minister, in discussing on March 28th, 1917, the questions which will come up for settlement in Parliament after the war, included among the problems of reconstruction "the trade of this country, the industries of this country, the relations of capital and labour in this country, the relations . . . of one class of labour to another class of labour, questions of the conditions of life in this country, the health of the people, the housing of the people, the education of the people, the relations of this country to the whole Empire, and the relations of the Empire to the rest of the world."

We have sought to show that women are vitally concerned in every one of these questions—not merely in the "relations of one class of labour to another class of labour," but in all the wider issues of **industrial** and **economic development,** of **social reform and of Imperial** and **international reorganisation. It is only by admitting women to the fullest possible share in the pursuit of all these ends that we can hope to build up again a national life worthy of the immeasurable sacrifice of the last three years.**

II.—THE PROBLEMS OF RECONSTRUCTION.

(A) ECONOMIC.

(*See figures, Pages* 10 and 11.)

Since July, 1914, the number of **women employed** on commercial and industrial work (excluding outworkers and domestic servants) has increased **by 1,072,000,** the total in January, 1917, being approximately **4,344,000.** The immediate purpose of this increased activity on the part of women has been to maintain the country's economic production at a level which would otherwise have been impossible, owing to the absorption into the army of a great part of the country's male labour. **Of the additional women employed, 1,071,000 are reported by employers as directly replacing men or doing work formerly regarded as men's work, and it has been universally acknowledged that the work done by women has made it possible for England to carry on the war.**

What will be the economic position in England after the war? The diminished production of three years of war will have to be made good; work that has been left undone owing to more pressing needs will have to be carried out; the whole productivity of the country must be increased if the burdens of the war are not to cripple the country's economic life. No official figures are available to show the resources of labour that will be forthcoming to meet the urgent need for increased production. But it is certain that the number of men available for productive work will be considerably less than before the war. Through disablement a large proportion will have sunk into the position of dependents, while before the war they were actively supporting other individuals in the community. If the total economic production of the country is not only to be maintained at its pre-war level but definitely increased, **the greater economic activity of women must remain as a permanent and developing factor in production.** The proportion of dependents in the community will be largely increased unless a great number of women pass from the ranks of dependents into the ranks of earners and producers.*

---

* In this connection it should be remembered that many thousands of women have been in receipt of separation allowances since August, 1914. Unless the pre-war incomes of these families (assuming that the male wage-earner returns to his employment) is supplemented either by some continued system of State allowances for mother and children, or by increased employment of the women themselves, return to dependence upon the male wage-earner will mean a serious reduction in the standard of living in a great number of households, and with it a lowering of efficiency and production.

The increased economic activity of women must therefore be a fundamental issue in the reconstruction which takes place after the war. Social and industrial reform will be impossible if the country's economic production cannot be developed to meet the claims which three years of war have imposed on our material wealth, but the economic activity of women must not be developed without regard to the industrial conditions and social needs of the country.

(B) INDUSTRIAL.

The relations between capital and labour, the relations between men and women workers, and the conditions of labour, both for men and women, will have to be adjusted after the war in such a way that the interests of all parties are properly safeguarded while the economic and social needs of the country as a whole must at the same time be taken into consideration. **At every stage in the adjustment the interests of women are vitally concerned;** but the industrial problems will present new and unique features in connection with the employment of women.

Before the war women were practically excluded partly by the conservatism of employers and partly by the opposition of trade unions—not unreasonably fearful of an undercutting of their rates of pay—from nearly all skilled processes excepting trades traditionally belonging to women, *e.g.*, cooking and the needle trades. This exclusion, effective though it was in operation, never received legal sanction, and was carried out without actual conflict either between men and women or men and employers. The undertaking now given by the Government to trade unions that women shall be turned out at the end of the war (see Munitions Act, Schedule 11, Paragraph 2, and Munitions Amendment Act, Paragraph 15) is a wholly new fact in English Industrial History. Both employers and trade unions will have political means of influencing legislation, but the **women themselves, as long as they remain voteless, possess no such influence.** And it must not be forgotten that any legislation directly bearing on the position of those women who are now doing skilled work or other work which is regarded as specially men's work, must affect the whole of the six or seven million women employed in so far as it narrows or widens the possibilities of employment open to women, and also in so far as it affects the question of wage rates. The problem is therefore not confined to the reinstatement of men in positions that during the war have been filled by women, but **extends to the whole question of the status of women in the economic life of the nation, and the parliamentary solution of this problem calls for the direct representation of the interests of women.**

During the war, too, working conditions have been changed in many ways, and the fact that good conditions benefit, not only the worker, but also the economic output, is being recognised. But Parliament must see that the conditions of labour after the war are not left to the will of the individual employer or trade union. The conditions of women's and children's work, with their reaction on the economic and social welfare of the community, will especially require very far-reaching and carefully considered legislation. **The interests of women will be seriously affected** by legislation regulating the control of factories and workshops, wages, hours of work, overtime and night-work, demarcation, the employment of married women, and the employment of children, as well as in all legislation directly affecting the health of the workers.

Such legislation can only meet the real needs of the community if it is framed by a Parliament which represents all the main interests involved.

(C) SOCIAL.

When the Prime Minister spoke of the conditions of life in this country which will have to be settled by Parliament after the war, he referred to three chief problems: public health, housing, and education.

In the settlement of each of these problems women are closely concerned. At the present time the health of the coming generation is of vital interest to the community, and provision must be made on a much wider scale than formerly for the welfare of expectant mothers and of children in the first five years of life; while legislation to protect the health of school-children and wage earners will be no less necessary. From the rate of infant mortality in the year 1915* (see figures p. 12) we may deduce that 309,870 children in the first year of life have died between August, 1914, and April, 1917, besides the very large number of pre-natal deaths which are not recorded. Whatever may be the causes of this immense national loss—whether poverty, disease, ignorance, the employment of women with young children, the evils of housing conditions or the difficulties of obtaining a pure milk supply—it is obvious that they **cannot be removed by legislation in which women have no direct voice.**

Further legislation dealing with venereal disease and prostitution will also come before Parliament in the near future, and here again a satisfactory measure can only be arrived at by co-operation between men and women.

The problem of housing is so closely bound up with questions of public health that its importance to women is obvious; and it must be remembered

* Figures for 1916 are not yet available.

that more than half the adult women of this country are at present occupied entirely in the home, so that **women are more affected than any other class by bad housing.**

The State control of education now includes, besides the determination of the school age, of the curriculum and of the qualifications and salaries of teachers, the provision of medical inspection and of free meals for school children, and the care of the feeble-minded. Before the war 75 per cent. of teachers in elementary schools were women.* The raising of the school age, the provision of continuation schools and trade schools both for boys and girls, and the improvement of the salaries of teachers are among the questions which are already demanding the consideration of Parliament.

In all these matters women have already taken an active part, as is shown by the number and importance of women's organisations carrying on social and administrative work. (See p. 14.) But both individuals and organisations have found themselves seriously handicapped in the field of social reform by lack of direct political power. A body of women worked for twelve years to bring about the passing of the Midwives Act of 1902, and Josephine Butler and her supporters devoted seventeen years to the work which resulted in the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act in 1886. Women themselves have realised more and more that work, however active, and organisation, however efficient, cannot produce the results, in terms of legislation, which can be produced by direct political pressure. **As legislative control of the conditions of life increases, so the need of the vote for women increases, and with it the gain to the nation resulting from women's share in its political life.**

(D) IMPERIAL AND INTERNATIONAL.

In the readjustment of the relations of this country to the rest of the Empire, and of the Empire to the whole world, which the Imperial Parliament in co-operation with the Dominion Parliaments will have to face after the war, **the women of some parts of the Empire are already certain of having a voice.** (See pp. 23 and 24.) In the settlement of these questions all women are, however, equally concerned. The women of Britain and S. Africa will be as much affected as the women of New Zealand, Australia and Canada

* Teachers in England and Wales 1913-14.

	Men.	Women.
Elementary	42,105	123,369
Secondary	5,477	5,377

In addition there are 3,418 part-time teachers, but no information is given as to whether these are men or women.

(Figures supplied by the National Union of Teachers.)

by the relations which are established between different parts of the Empire after the war. Among the questions which will have to be dealt with by legislation are questions of emigration, of the varying conditions and status of women within the Empire, of Colonial trade and employment: and in all these problems women have a vital interest. They cannot be justly solved by any assembly or group of assemblies in which the women of some parts of the Empire have direct representation and from which the women of other parts, including the mother-country, are altogether excluded.

Finally, Parliament will be called upon to deal with the most complex of all the problems to which the Prime Minister alluded in his speech on March 28th, 1917—the problem of the reorganisation of international relations. Both men and women are vitally concerned in the establishment of an international order which shall not only make war unnecessary but shall help towards the fulfilment of those **ideals of justice and progress which inspire women no less than men.** Women must be allowed to take their full share, in time of peace as well as in time of war, in the concrete realisation of **liberty** and **democracy throughout the world.**

III (A).—TABLES SHOWING :—

1. The Extension of the Employment of Women.

Board of Trade Estimates, January, 1917.

The following figures apply to employed persons, excluding outworkers, domestic servants and women employed in small workrooms in the dress-making trade. They do not apply to independent professional women such as doctors and teachers in schools other than municipal schools, nor to nurses in military and naval hospitals.

The total number of trained nurses is estimated by the National Union of Trained Nurses at from 40,000 to 60,000. The total membership of Voluntary Aid Detachments (men and women together) now exceeds 81,000, of whom about two-thirds are women.

The number of outworkers and domestic servants is estimated at about 2,000,000.

JANUARY, 1917.

	Estimated number of females employed in July, 1914.	Increase (+) or decrease (—) in the employment of females since July, 1914.	Direct replacement of men by women.
Industries*	2,172,000	+423,000	376,000
Government establishments† ..	2,000	+147,000	139,000
Agriculture in Gt. Britain (Permanent Labour)	80,000	— 14,000‡	23,000
Transport§	19,000	+ 51,000	52,000
Finance and Banking	9,500	+ 43,000	42,000
Commerce	496,000	+274,000	278,000
Professions	67,500	+ 18,000	17,000
Hotels, Theatres, Public Houses, Cinemas, &c.	176,000	+ 10,000	31,000
Civil Service	66,000	+ 76,000	73,000
Local Government	184,000	+ 44,000	40,000
TOTAL	3,272,000	+1,072,000	1,071,000

* Including Controlled Firms, but excluding all kinds of Government Establishments.

† Including Arsenals, Dockyards and National Shell-filling and Projectile Factories.

§ Estimated figure.

‡ This decrease is due to variation in season. The number of women employed in agriculture (in Great Britain only) in July, 1916, was 66,000 more than in July, 1914.

2. The Number of Women in Industries.

Board of Trade Estimates, January, 1917.

Industry.	Estimated number of females employed, July, 1914.	Increase or decrease in number, January, 1917.	Estimated number of females directly or indirectly replacing males, January, 1917.
Building	7,000	+ 13,000	7,000
Mining	7,000	+ 4,000	4,000
Metal Trades	170,000	+270,000	129,000
Chemical Trades	40,000	+ 45,000	27,000
Textile Trades	863,000	+ 25,000	59,600
Clothing Trades	620,000	— 32,000	30,900
Food Trades	184,000	+ 41,000	50,000
Paper and Printing Trades ..	147,500	— 5,000	17,500
Wood Trades	44,000	+ 19,000	16,000
All Trades (including some not shown separately)	2,172,000	+423,000	376,000

NOTES (1) There is a decline in the total number of women employed in the cotton, linen, silk and lace trades, in every branch of the clothing trade except boot and shoe making, and in card-board-box making, printing and book-binding; but in each of these industries some women are reported as replacing men.

(2) Substitution of female for male labour has taken place in every industry or occupation included in the Board of Trade figures.

(B).—TABLES SHOWING :—

Number of Male and Female Dependents over the Age of 10 Years. 1911 Census.

	Men.			Women.			
	Married.	Unmarried.	Total.	Married.	Unmarried.	Widowed.	Total.
Occupied ..	6,200,734	5,252,931	11,453,665	680,191	3,379,532	411,011	4,830,734
Unoccupied ..	295,052	1,913,483	2,208,535	5,950,093	3.122,493	953,793	10,026,379

NOTE.—Women engaged in the duties of their own households are treated as "unoccupied" in the census tabulation.

(c).—TABLES SHOWING :—

1. Birth-rate : United Kingdom 1913-1915. (Exclusive of still-born.)

Year.	Proportion per 1,000 of Population.	Total.
1913	23·2	1,102,500
1914	22·9	1,101,836 (Provisional figures)
1915	21·6	1,024,378 ,, ,,

2. Infant Death-rate : United Kingdom 1913-1915.

Death of Children under 1 year to 1,000 Births (exclusive of still-born).

Year.	Proportion per 1,000 births.
1913	108
1914	104
1915	110

3. Infant Death-rate in Countries where Women are Enfranchised.

Proportion of deaths of children under the age of 1 year per 1,000 births.

Finland. Women Enfranchised in 1907. Year.	Proportion per 1,000 births.	**Norway.** Women Enfranchised in 1908. Year.	Proportion per 1,000 births.
1901	145	1901	93
1902	129	1902	75
1903	127	1903	79
1904	120	1904	76
1905	135	1905	81
1906	119	1906	69
1907	**112**	1907	67
1908	125	**1908**	**76**
1909	111	1909	72
1910	118	1910	67
1911	114	1911	65
1912	109	1912	68
1913	113	1913	65
1914	104	1914	68

New Zealand. Women Enfranchised in 1893. Year.	Proportion per 1,000 births.	**Commonwealth of Australia.** Women Enfranchised in 1902. Year.	Proportion per 1,000 births.
1881	92	1891	116
1882	88	1892	106
1883	104	1893	115
1884	79	1894	103
1885	89	1895	101
1886	98	1896	113
1887	**94**	1897	105
1888	72	1898	127
1889	79	1899	117
1890	79	1900	100
1891	91	1901	104
1892	89	**1902**	**107**
1893	**88**	1903	111
1894	81	1904	82
1895	88	1905	82
1896	77	1906	83
1897	72	1907	81
1898	80	1908	78
1899	96	1909	72
1900	75	1910	75
1901	71	1911	68·49
1902	83	1912	71·74
1903	81	1913	72·21
1904	71	1914	71
1905	68	1915	68
1906	62		
1907	89		
1908	68		
1909	62		
1910	68		
1911	56		
1912	51		
1913	59		
1914	51		
1915	50		

IV.—CHIEF ORGANISATIONS OF WOMEN ENGAGED IN SOCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE WORK.

*Apprenticeship and Skilled Employment Association.
Associated Women's Friendly Societies.
Association for Infant Consultations and Schools for Mothers.
Association of Moral and Social Hygiene.
Association for Supply of Midwives.
Associated Society for Protection of Women and Children.
British Women's Temperance Association.
*Charity Organisation Society.
*Children's Aid Society.
*Church Army.
Criminal Law Amendment Committee.
*Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society.
Domestic Workers' Union of Great Britain.
Federation of University Women.
Fabian Society—Women's Group.
*Garden City and Town-Planning Association.
Girls' Friendly Society.
Industrial Law Committee.
Invalid Children's Aid Association.
Irish Women's Suffrage and Local Government Association.
*Mental After-Care Association.
Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants.
*National Association for Care of the Feeble-Minded.
*National Association for Prevention of Consumption.
National Child Welfare Societies.
*National Committee for the Prevention of Destitution.
*National Council of Public Morals.
National Federation of Women Workers.
*National League for Physical Education and Improvement.
National Organisation of Girls' Clubs.
National Society of Day Nurseries.
*National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children.
*National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.
National Union of Women Workers.
*Reformatory and Refuge Union.
*Salvation Army.
*Social Welfare Association of London.

* Joint organisations of men and women.

*Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association.
Students' Careers Association.
Women's Co-operative Guild.
Women's Farm and Garden Union.
Women's Imperial Health Association.
Women's Industrial Council.
Women's Labour League.
Women's League for Municipal Reform.
Women's League of Service.
Women's Local Government Society.
Women's Medical Federation.
Women's Municipal Party.
Women's National Health Association of Ireland.
Women Patrols.
Women's Service Bureau.
Women's Trade Union League.
*Workers' Educational Association.
Young Women's Christian Association.

NOTE.—Apart from Suffrage Societies, the following central Women's Organisations have passed resolutions in favour of Women's Suffrage:—

Association of Headmistresses in Secondary Schools.
Association of University Women Teachers.
Incorporated Assistant Mistresses.
International Congress of Nurses.
International Council of Women.
National British Women's Temperance Association.
National Federation of Women Workers.
National Union of Girls' Clubs.
National Union of Women Workers.
Railway Women's Guild.
Scottish Union of Women's Temperance Association.
Society of Registered Nurses.
Society of Women Musicians.
Welsh Women's Liberal Federation.
Women's Co-operative Guild.
Women's Labour League.
Women's Liberal Federation.
Women's National Liberal Association.
Women's Trade Union League.

* Joint organisations of men and women.

V.—STATEMENTS OF OPINIONS ON WOMEN'S WAR WORK BY EMPLOYERS AND OTHERS.

RT. HON. DAVID LLOYD GEORGE, M.P.

1915. Speaking on the women munition workers at Glasgow on Christmas Day:—

I have seen women performing tasks hitherto allotted to skilled engineers—**performing them successfully**, swiftly—and yet it had only taken them, some two days, some a week, and some a fortnight, to learn how to do that work.

January 11th, 1917. Guildhall.

A man who has been Munitions Minister for twelve months must feel a **debt of gratitude to the women** for what they have done. They have helped to win the war, and without them we could not have done it.

EARL OF DERBY.

July 13th, 1916. Queen's Hall Y.W.C.A. Meeting.

Women are now part and parcel of our great Army, without them it would be impossible for progress to be made, but **with them I believe that victory can be assured.**

March 17th, 1917. Albert Hall.

When the history of the war comes to be written, one of the most interesting and instructive chapters will be the one that records the **work that women have done.**

RT. HON. HERBERT SAMUEL, M.P.

September, 1915. Coventry.

The man or woman who makes the shell or fuse is as valuable in this campaign as the man who fires the shell.

MR. F. KELLAWAY (PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO MINISTRY OF MUNITIONS).

January, 1917.

In a sense it is true that **our Armies in the field have been saved by the efforts of our women.** There are at present in national factories and controlled establishments close on **half a million women working day and night,**

who are as really protecting the sanctity of their homes and the national honour as are the men who, with incomparable bravery, storm the German positions. . . .

Our women have come forward voluntarily, and will come forward in greater numbers as soon as they realise the national need. If we succeed, as we shall succeed, in overwhelming the mass of material which Germany will have prepared, it will be because the **women in this kingdom have shown themselves willing to work for the cause for which their men are prepared to die.**

BARON GAINFORD OF HEADLAM (RT. HON. J. A. PEASE, M.P.).

July 3rd, 1916. Annual Statement to House of Commons *re* Telephone Service.

Twenty-five thousand women have come forward, more out of patriotic motives than from any other, in order to take the places of those who had gone.

In connection with Zeppelin raids, the work of the women who have come forward voluntarily to do duty at night deserves, I think, very high praise. **Hundreds of women have thus come forward.** When Zeppelin raids have been anticipated, and sometimes when they have been going on, these women have come out of their homes, and even when bombs were dropping, gone to their positions in the various exchanges. **They have played an important part in an organised scheme of air-raid warnings,** and in gallantry and self-sacrifice they have set a good example to the whole country.

EARL OF SELBORNE.

July 5th, 1916. Annual Meeting of the Agricultural Society.

He was not going to forget the women. They were appealed to, and many thousands responded nobly. **If it were not for the women agriculture would be absolutely at a standstill on many farms in England and Wales.** Whatever called upon to do in any other walk of life, they had done the same, and he thought there would be no man who could consider them less patriotic, less capable of comprehending the issue, less prone to sacrifice than men.—(*Daily Telegraph.*)

LORD SYDENHAM.

July 13th, 1916. At the Queen's Hall Meeting (Y.W.C.A.).

He expressed the opinion that the great advance of our splendid Army could not have been accomplished **but** for the **untiring labours of the women.**

They might fairly claim that they have helped to save thousands of lives, to change the aspect of the war, and to launch our Army on the new road which leads to victory. Wherever intelligence, care, and close attention had been needed, **women had immensely distinguished themselves ;** for the first time they had been able to play a direct part in war, and the **country could not be too proud of what its women were doing.**—(*Daily Chronicle*, July 14th, 1916.)

RT. HON. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P.

15th August, 1916. In Report on Munitions.

Now I want to say a word about women. **Women** of every station, with or without previous experience of the difficulties, or of the strain and monotony of munition work, **have proved themselves able to undertake work which before the war was regarded as solely the province of men,** and often of skilled men alone.

Indeed, it is not too much to say that **our Armies have been saved and victory assured largely by the women** in the munition factories. . . . There are, I believe, some 500 different munition processes, upon which women are now engaged, two-thirds of which have never been performed by a woman previous to twelve months ago. I do not want to elaborate this point, because it is well known to the House, but I ask the House to consider this, together with the work done by women in hospitals, in agriculture, in transport trades, and in every type of clerical occupation, and I would respectfully submit, when time and opportunity offer, it will be opportune to ask : **Where is the man now who would deny to woman the civil rights which she has earned by hard work ?**

VISCOUNT FRENCH.

October 28th, 1916. Town Hall, Leeds.

Since I have been home I have moved about a great deal among the sick and wounded, and I think all **our earnest thanks should go out, above all, to the women of this country.** I have seen young girls, not only of one class, but of every class, doing hard work like men. If we go into the hospitals we see refined ladies who have been brought up in luxury on their knees scrubbing floors, doing all sorts of menial work they possibly can to assist the sick and the wounded. I believe when the history of this war comes to be written **the work of the women of England will furnish some of its most brilliant pages.**

RT. HON. REGINALD MCKENNA, M.P.

November 1st, 1916. Telegram addressed to a Meeting of the Birmingham Women's Settlement.

My best wishes for the success of your meeting in Birmingham. Side by side with the response of the men to Lord Kitchener's call for soldiers history will set the no less remarkable achievement of the women of the country during this war, in taking the place of men in every department of life. We all realise the splendid work they are doing in nursing, but only those who have been connected with the organisation of great patriotic efforts, such as the War Savings Campaign, know the extent to which **the success of those movements is due to the voluntary work of women.**

RT. HON. W. F. MASSEY.

November 7th, 1916. Guildhall.

After paying a tribute to the work of the British Navy, Mr. Massey went on to thank the women of Great Britain—if not of the whole Empire—for the position they had occupied since the war broke out. Not only had they worked enthusiastically and hard, but their devotion and example had been beyond value. There were many young men in the trenches who would not have been there if it had not been for **their mothers who showed them where their duty lay.** He also thanked the women of this country for the hospitality and kindness they had extended to the Oversea soldiers. What they had done would never be forgotten. **A nation whose women could rise to an occasion like this would always play a prominent part among the nations of the world.**

RT. HON. A. J. BALFOUR, M.P.

Writing in reference to the Mansion House meeting on January 22nd, promoted by the Women Wartime Workers' Movement, Mr. Balfour states :—

No words of mine are necessary to recommend the objects for which the meeting has been organised. Those objects must assuredly appeal to all who realise the **splendid manner in which our women munition workers are helping in the war.**

SIR GILBERT H. CLAUGHTON, BART.

February 23rd, 1917. At General Meeting of Court of Proprietors, L. & N.W.R.

In conclusion let me add how proud we, as a Board, are to realise by experience what this Company has been able to do in our national crisis ;

and when I say "this Company" I use the word in its largest sense: Proprietors, Officers, Staff, from the highest to the lowest, **not omitting the willing and excellent work of 6,388 women added to our ranks.**

SIR THOMAS BARLOW.

March 14th, 1917. At Institute of Public Health.

It was a revelation to him how little real illness there had been amongst the munition workers when one thought of the amount of work done and the hours worked. One of the causes had been the excellence of the cooking and the variety of food supplied. **Women had wonderful powers of endurance, especially in monotonous work.**

RT. HON. SIR E. CARSON, K.C., M.P.

March 17th, 1917. At Albert Hall Meeting.

I should like to be permitted to express on behalf of **the Board of Admiralty our sense of deep obligation to the women who have come forward to help us** in various ways at this time of national stress. Before the war no women were employed in our central offices in London. We now avail ourselves of the services of nearly **2,000.** In the Royal Dockyards and naval establishments at home there were about **450 women** employed before the war. There are now about **7,000.** In the private engineering shops before the war there were of course many women employed; but the number since the war has increased manifold. In the private shipyards before the war there were probably few, if any, women employed; **there are now many thousands.** I could not easily overstate their devotion to their work. Their physical endurance is, in my opinion, beyond the expectation even of those who rightly understand the spirit which inspires them. I shall be glad if you will allow me this opportunity of making this statement, and to say that undoubtedly we shall want many more women as the work of dilution and substitution in the Royal Dockyards and naval establishments and in the private engineering shops and shipyards proceeds.

MR. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN.

April, 1917. Interview with Mr. Edward Marshall.

Before the war there was great restlessness among the younger generation of British women. They were not satisfied with idleness, yet they found most occupations barred to them. Now, through the medium of National Service, they have had their opportunity, and to it they have responded in a manner astonishing even to those who thought most highly

of their abilities and capacities. There never has been a doubt of their keen patriotism, but their mental adaptability and even their physical strength have proved to be surprising.

A veritable revolution has begun in this way, yet it is apparent that the entrance of Englishwomen into spheres hitherto reserved exclusively for men has but started. Where it will end depends to some extent upon how long the war lasts, but **we men are beginning to feel convinced that the wonderful things which women already have done are but samples of their capabilities.**

LORD FABER.

May 1st, 1917. Presiding at a meeting on Women's Suffrage, Philosophical Hall, Leeds.

Women had shown, as was always known, that they had brain and intelligence, and that they were able to do very much work that had hitherto been done by men. At Beckett's Bank, in Park Row, before, there were no women; since the War thirty-two members out of a staff of sixty had joined the Army, and their places had been **filled by women, who did all kinds of work in the Bank,** and did it extremely well. At the offices of the *Yorkshire Post*—of which he had been chairman for about thirty years—women were helping in office work, and he was **confident women could do almost everything in the office.** On the London and North Western Railway, of which he was a director, women were employed in various capacities; in fact, the **railways of this country could not be run if the women had not come forward.**

EXTRACT FROM REPORT OF MISS ANDERSON, H.M. Principal Lady Inspector of Factories, for the year 1915.

On the actual substitutions effected, while comment is made on the unequal progress comparing factory with factory in one and the same industry, and varying degrees of success in some industries are mentioned, the Inspectors are unanimous in speaking of the **admirable spirit and natural skill widely shown by the women.** "What strikes one most in Scotland is the adaptability of the women. 'Most satisfactory,' is the common reply of employers questioned as to how far substitution has succeeded. The remarkable ability shown has been the result, not only of natural capacity, but also of patriotism, and we must attribute the staying power of the women and girls to the thought that their best efforts were helping their men at the Front."—(Miss Vines.)

As regards Englishwomen: "The revelation of their own hitherto unsuspected and undeveloped capacity has undoubtedly come as a surprise to many women engaged in unfamiliar war work. They have learnt that they are capable of better things. . . . With training in new and more complicated operations the new element of interest has been brought into their work, not only interest in its aim and object, though this acts in many cases with inspiring force, but also in the actual work itself."—(Miss C. Smith.) In wire-drawing and engineering industries "it is remarkable, considering the half-heartedness of the initial experiment, how general is the satisfaction over its success. It is an everyday occurrence to be told frankly by foremen that the women are doing **'very well indeed, much better than I ever thought they could.'**"—(Miss Lennard.) To myself, a managing foreman in a great shell factory said with emphasis, "there is more in this than people think, **women have been too much kept back.**" "In some cases where special aptitude is shown, women have been trained to grind tools and set machines. One young woman told me with pride that she could take her machine to pieces, and set it up for herself again. The employer spoke highly of her, but she is no exception."—(Miss Tracey.)

EXTRACT FROM BRITISH ASSOCIATION REPORT (Labour, Finance, and the War for 1916).

In the learning of operations—many of which are entirely new to women—**they have shown a degree of attention, dexterity and quickness** which points to the possibility, given the proper advantages, of their acquiring a high degree of skill and technical expertness.

THE ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN CLERKS AND SECRETARIES REPORT:—

The bank managers and the ordinary **business employers** on the whole **speak most highly of the work of women** who have come to replace men in banks and offices.

This statement is borne out by Mr. Ingram of the L.C.C. Education Offices, who reports that out of 1,200 women placed through him with banks and in offices only two complaints have been received. The general opinion of managers and heads of firms is that the **"Women are doing their work splendidly."**

Women have for the first time been employed by the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis at New Scotland Yard, who reports that:—

The work of the women clerks employed at this Office has been very satisfactory.

VI.—WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE IN PRACTICE.

(a) In Other Countries.

NEW ZEALAND.

Qualifications of Electors.

All male and female adults who are British subjects either by birth or by naturalisation in New Zealand, and who are not debarred by law, may be registered as electors, provided they have resided 12 months in New Zealand and one month immediately preceding registration in the district wherein they desire to be enrolled, and no person may be registered for more than one district.

Woman Suffrage was granted in New Zealand in 1893.

ELECTION STATISTICS.

Percentage of Voters to Electors Enrolled.

	Males.	Females.
1893	69·61	85·18
1896	75·90	76·44
1899	79·06	75·70
1902	78·44	74·52
1905	84·07	82·23
1908	81·11	78·26
1911	84·58	82·57
1914	85·43	83·73

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

Qualifications of electors and for eligibility to the Commonwealth Parliament: Since the first Parliament of the Commonwealth was instituted, 1902, an Electoral Act has unified the franchise for both Chambers, on the basis of universal adult (male and female) suffrage.

Woman Suffrage was granted in—

South Australia	1893
Western Australia	1899
New South Wales	1902
Tasmania	1903
Queensland	1905
Victoria	1909
The Commonwealth of Australia	1902

Federal Election Statistics: Commonwealth of Australia.

The Senate.

Percentage of Voters to Electors Enrolled.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
1903	53·09	39·96	46·86
1906	56·38	43·30	50·21
1910	67·58	56·17	62·16
1913	77·22	69·71	73·66
1914	77·10	67·69	72·64

The House of Representatives.

1903	56·47	43·50	50·27
1906	57·35	44·81	51·48
1910	68·12	56·93	62·80
1913	77·01	69·56	73·47
1914	77·88	68·79	73·53

It will be seen from the foregoing table that the electors of the Commonwealth are setting a higher value on the privilege of the franchise. The percentage of female voters in 1914, while still considerably below that of the males, shows a marked increase on that of female voters in the earlier years of Federation.

(See Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1914, No. 8.)

Resolution by Australian Senate.

The following resolution was passed in the Australian Senate by a unanimous vote on November 17th, 1910, and a rider to the effect that a copy be cabled to the British Prime Minister, was carried by eleven votes to four:—

> **That this Senate is of opinion that the extension of the suffrage to the women of Australia for States and Commonwealth Parliaments has had the most beneficial results.** It has led to the more orderly conduct of elections, and at the last Federal election the women's vote in the majority of the States showed a greater proportionate increase than that cast by the men. It has given a greater prominence to legislation particularly affecting women and children, although the women have not taken up such questions to the exclusion of others of wider significance. In matters of defence and Imperial concern they have **proved themselves as far-seeing and discriminating as men.** Because the reform has brought nothing but good, though disaster was freely prophesied, **we respectfully urge that all nations enjoying representative government would be well advised in granting votes to women.**

A similar resolution was passed unanimously a few days later by the House of Representatives.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

QUALIFICATION OF VOTERS.

The House of Representatives is composed of members elected every second year by the vote of citizens who, according to the laws of their respective States, are qualified to vote.

QUALIFICATION.—In general such voters are all male citizens over 21 years of age. Neither race nor colour affects the rights of citizens.

RESIDENTIAL QUALIFICATION.—The franchise is not absolutely universal.

TAXES, REGISTRATION.—Residence for at least 1 year in most States (in Rhode Island and Kentucky 2 years, in Michigan and Maine 3 months) is necessary, in some States the payment of taxes, in others registration.

UNNATURALISED PERSONS.—On the other hand, many of the Western States admit to the franchise unnaturalised persons who have formally declared their intention to become citizens.

EXCLUSIONS.—Several of the Southern States have adopted methods—which differ from one another—too complicated for explanation here—with the express and avowed purpose of excluding the negroes from the franchise, and yet avoiding the constitutional consequences of "discriminating on account of race, colour, or previous condition of servitude."

Untaxed Indians are excluded from the franchise—in most States convicts—in some States duellists and fraudulent voters.

In Massachusetts voters are required to be able to read English. In some Southern States they are required to give a reasonable explanation of what they read.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE.—The following States admit women to the franchise on equal terms with men:—

Wyoming 1869
Washington 1910
Kansas 1912
Montana 1914
Colorado 1893
California 1911
Oregon 1912
The Territory of Alaska 1913
Utah and Idaho 1896
Arizona 1912
Nevada 1914
Illinois (Presidential and Municipal Suffrage) 1913
Ohio (Presidential and Municipal Suffrage) 1917
N. Dakota (Presidential and Municipal Suffrage) 1917
Indiana (Presidential and Municipal Suffrage) 1917

CANADA.

Within the last nine months equal suffrage for the election of provincial legislatures has been extended to the women of four great Canadian provinces, Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia, which comprise a total area of over a million square miles and include such important and fast-growing towns as Winnipeg, Edmonton, Calgary, Victoria, Regina, Brantford and Vancouver. The population of these provinces in 1911 amounted to 1,715,189, and it has undoubtedly grown much larger since then. A Franchise Bill in Ontario has passed its second reading unanimously, and **the Premier, Sir William Hearst, has promised to make woman suffrage effective in time for the next general election.**

In Nova Scotia a Franchise Bill has passed its second reading.

Women do not vote for the Dominion Parliament.

FINLAND.

Qualification of Electors. Woman Suffrage granted in 1907.

The qualification for women voters is the same as that for men, *i.e.*, every Finnish citizen (man or woman) who has reached his or her 24th year is eligible as a voter, and everyone who is entitled to vote for members of the Diet is also eligible for election.

Election Statistics.

At the 1916 Elections to the Finnish Diet, 24 women, or 12 per cent. of the total number of deputies, were returned.

NORWAY.

Qualification of Electors.

Women were enfranchised in 1907. Under a new franchise law then passed, manhood suffrage was given to men and a tax-paying suffrage to women. The object of the differentiation was to reduce the number of the women voters. Fears based on the supposed dangers arising from there being more women than men in the total adult population having been removed by experience of the working of Women's Suffrage, in 1913 the taxpaying qualification for women was abandoned and simple adult suffrage for both sexes adopted.

Election Statistics.

1909. First election for Storthing in which women voted.

Average number of women voting was 55·29 per cent. as against 67·47 per cent. men.

One woman candidate elected for Christiania as deputy-member.

1915. Of the votes cast, 55 per cent. cast by men, 45 per cent. by women.

(N.B.—Women were, in 1915, 53 per cent. of the electorate.)

DENMARK.

Qualification of Electors. Woman Suffrage granted in 1915.

The franchise is enjoyed by all citizens of good reputation, male and female (of an age gradually decreasing from 30 years at present to 25), who are not in receipt of poor-relief.

All voters are eligible for election to the House.

ICELAND.

Qualification of Electors. Woman Suffrage granted in 1915.

Women begin with a higher age limit, which will be gradually reduced.

(B) WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM ON THE BASIS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SPEAKER'S CONFERENCE.

The following recommendations with regard to the enfranchisement of women were made by the Speaker's Conference on Electoral Reform and published in their Report of the Conference on June 27th, 1917 :—

(Clause VI.) The Local Government Register.

The franchise for Local Government purposes is so closely connected with the Parliamentary franchise that the Conference thought it desirable to deal with the matter, and resolved that :—

31 (a) In substitution for all existing franchises for Local Government purposes every person who for a period of six months immediately preceding the 15th day of January and the 15th day of July in any year has occupied as owner or tenant any land or premises in a Local Government area in England and Wales shall be entitled to be registered and to vote as a Local Government elector in that area.

(b) For the purpose of this resolution neither sex nor marriage shall be a disqualification, provided that a husband and wife shall not both be qualified in respect of the same premises.

(c) The Conference makes no recommendation with regard to the Local Government franchise in Scotland or Ireland.

(Clause VIII.) Woman Suffrage.

The Conference decided by a majority that some measure of woman suffrage should be conferred. A majority of the Conference was also of opinion that if Parliament should decide to accept the principle, the most practical form would be to confer the vote in the terms of the following resolution :—

33. Any woman on the Local Government Register who has attained a specified age, and the wife of any man who is on that Register if she has attained that age, shall be entitled to be registered and to vote as a parliamentary elector.

Various ages were discussed, of which 30 and 35 received most favour.

The Conference further resolved that if Parliament decides to enfranchise women, a woman of the specified age, who is a graduate of any University having parliamentary representation shall be entitled to vote as a University Elector.

The number of women at present on the Local Government Register is about one million.

Figures showing the number of women occupiers and wives of occupiers in the United Kingdom are not available. The number who will have the Parliamentary vote if the above proposal becomes law has been estimated at about 4,000,000 (*Manchester Guardian*, January 31st, 1917) and about 6 000,000 (Mr. W. H. Dickinson, *Nation*, February 3rd, 1917). According to the Census of 1911 the total numbers of men and women in Great Britain and Ireland, at various ages from 21 to 35, were as follows :—

Number of Men and Women in 1911 aged

	21 years and upwards.	25 years and upwards.	30 years and upwards.	35 years and upwards.
		Men.		
Great Britain	11,210,000	9,858,000	8,220,000	6,674,000
Ireland*	1,277,000	1,126,000	966,000	813,000
United Kingdom ..	12,487,000	10,984,000	9,186,000	7,487,000
		Women.		
Great Britain	12,506,000	10,992,000	9,165,000	7,478,000
Ireland*	1,313,000	1,165,000	994,000	841,000
United Kingdom ..	13,819,000	12,157,000	10,159,000	8,319,000

* No separate figure of numbers aged 20 years is given for Ireland. The above estimate is based on the proportion aged 20 in the 20 and under 25 group for Great Britain.

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